

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6259

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 02551

LIMDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR FR US

SUBJECT: FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER DISCUSSES EGYPTIAN
PRESIDENT SADAT'S VISIT TO PARIS

REF: PARIS 2478; PARIS 2467

BEGIN SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES INVITED ME TO QUAI THURSDAY MORNING FOR A REVIEW OF EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT'S THREE-DAY VISIT TO PARIS JANUARY 27-29. SAUVAGNARGUES SUMMED UP THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE VISIT AS BEING ESSENTIALLY PSYCHOLOGICAL IN NATURE. SADAT WANTED A FORUM TO DEMONSTRATE ALTERNATE SOURCES OF SUPPORT TO THAT OF THE SOVIETS, AS WELL AS TO REAFFIRM HIS MODERATE POSTURE WITH RESPECT TO FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. THE FRENCH WANTED TO STRENGTHEN THEIR TIES TO THE MOST IMPORTANT COUNTRY IN THE REGION AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CURRENT MOMENTUM FAVORING NEW INITIATIVES BY SECRETARY KISSINGER. FRANCE HAS AGREED TO PROVIDE FIFTY MIRAGE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TO
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EGYPT, AND IS NOW CONSIDERING AN EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR

AN 800-MEGAWATT INDUSTRIAL NUCLEAR REACTOR. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES INVITED ME TO THE QUAI EARLY THURSDAY MORNING FOR A REVIEW OF THE SADAT VISIT. HE SAID HE WAS UNABLE TO REACH THE SECRETARY BY PHONE AFTER SADAT LEFT PARIS TO RETURN TO CAIRO WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VISIT FROM THE FRENCH POINT OF VIEW.

2. SADAT EXPRESSED OPTIMISM AND CONFIDENCE WITH RESPECT TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT TAKING PLACE. THE FRENCH WERE ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED BY HIS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A REFERENCE TO "RECOGNIZED, SECURE AND GUARANTEED FRONTIERS FOR ALL STATES IN THE REGION" IN THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE. TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, WHO IS NOW IN PARIS, TOLD SAUVAGNARGUES THAT EGYPTIANS HAVE NEVER BEFORE AGREED TO THIS CONCEPT IN WRITING.

3. AS FAR AS GUARANTEES ARE CONCERNED, SAUVAGNARGUES SAID EGYPTIANS FORESEE TROOPS OF ALL MAJOR POWERS, INCLUDING THE FRENCH, TAKING PART IN PROVIDING SECURITY IN DEPTH OF TEN KILOMETERS ON BOTH SIDES OF ALL BORDERS. SAUVAGNARGUES SAID FRENCH SIDE STRESSED THAT THIS IS LONG WAY OFF IN FUTURE, AND MAIN PRIORITY NOW IS MAKING PROGRESS ON NEXT STEP OF DISENGAGEMENT.

4. SAUVAGNARGUES SAID ONE OF MAIN REASONS SADAT CAME TO PARIS WAS TO SHOW THAT EGYPT DOES NOT DEPEND EXCLUSIVELY ON SOVIETS FOR ARMS. IN THIS CONTEXT, FRENCH HAVE AGREED TO SUPPLY 50 MIRAGE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT. WHETHER SALE WILL INVOLVE MIRAGE III AIRCRAFT OR THE F-L MODEL, DEPENDS ON OUTCOME OF NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUING IN PARIS BETWEEN MILITARY SALES OFFICIALS. ON SUBJECT OF USSR, SAUVAGNARGUES SAID PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING WAS ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED BY SADAT'S VEHEMENCE IN CRITICIZING SOVIETS. GISCARD USED THE TERMS "FANTASTIC" AND "AMAZING" IN DESCRIBING SADAT'S NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT THE SOVIETS.

5. SAUVAGNARGUES SAID HE WAS RELUCTANT TO HAVE THE
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FINAL COMMUNIQUE SAY THAT FRENCH MILITARY SALES WOULD CONSTITUTE PARTIAL COMPENSATION FOR EGYPTIAN WAR LOSSES, BECAUSE OF THE IMPLICIT INSULT TO THE SOVIETS. FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMI WAS INSISTENT, HOWEVER. SAUVAGNARGUES MADE A SPECIAL POINT OF ASSURING ME THAT THE FRENCH HAVE NOT DONE ANYTHING TO UPSET THE MILITARY EQUILIBRIUM IN THE MIDDLE EAST THROUGH THEIR ARMS SALES AGREEMENTS WITH SADAT.

6. IN THE AREA OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION, SAUVAGNARGUES
SAID THE MAIN ASPECT OF THE VISIT WAS SADAT'S REQUEST
FOR AN 800-MEGAWATT NUCLEAR INDUSTRIAL REACTOR. SADAT EMPHASIZED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 02551

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REACTOR WOULD BE UTILIZED PURELY FOR INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES,
INCLUDING DESALINIZATION. SADAT ASKED GISCARD FOR
AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, WITH DETAILS TO BE NEGOTIATED
LATER. ACCORDING TO SAUVAGNARGUES, GISCARD DID NOT
REFUSE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE OUTRIGHT, BUT SAID FORMAL
APPROVAL WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT OUTCOME OF TALKS ON CONTROLS
AND GUARANTEES. SAUVAGNARGUES SAID GOF IS LOOKING FOR
MIDDLE WAY BETWEEN VIENNA-TYPE SAFEGUARDS WHICH DO NOT
APPEAR TO BE SUFFICIENTLY STRONG, AND INGERSOLL POINT
THREE SAFEGUARDS WHICH APPEAR TO GO TOO FAR IN IMPOSING
CONTROL OVER ENTIRE NUCLEAR CYCLE OF IMPORTING COUNTRY.
HE SAID GOF LEANING TOWARD REPROCESSING OF PLUTONIUM IN
FRANCE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE SALE OF REACTOR TO EGYPT IS
CONCERNED. SAUVAGNARGUES SAID GISCARD AND HE UNDERLINED
GREAT IMPORTANCE GOF ASSIGNS TO SAFEGUARDS THROUGHOUT
TALKS ON THIS ISSUE.

7. FINALLY, SADAT SAID HE WANTED GENEVA RECONVENED, AND HE WANTED FRANCE TO TAKE PART. GISCARD'S RESPONSE, SAUVAGNARGUES SAID, WAS TO EMPHASIZE THE NEED TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THE NEXT STEP IN DISENGAGEMENT AND TO WORRY ABOUT GENEVA LATER. FRENCH WANT TO CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTICIPATE IN OVERALL PEACE SETTLEMENT, BUT MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO OBTAIN A SETTLEMENT, NOT WHO PARTICIPATES.

8. COMMENT: SADAT'S VISIT TO FRANCE WAS CLEARLY PERIPHERAL TO MAIN ACTION REPRESENTED BY SECRETARY'S MEDIATING ROLE. THE VISIT DID NOT HURT, HOWEVER, TO THE EXTENT THAT SADAT'S STATESMANSHIP AND MODERATION RECEIVED ADDITIONAL EXPOSURE IN THE WEST. RUSH

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